Jan Hus & Martin Luther – How the Reformation Changed the World

12 days / 10 nights

Day 1: Departure from the USA

Faith is that which brings the Holy Spirit through the merits of Christ (Martin Luther).

A great adventure awaits us as we begin our Reformation Tour of the Czech Republic and Germany on an overnight flight to Prague.

Day 2: Prague

In Prague, our friendly Faith Journeys representatives will assist us to our motor coach for a journey into the city center for a panoramic sightseeing tour. We cross the famous Charles Bridge, lined on both sides by religious statues, leading us out of the Little Quarter into the Old Town where we will see the Renaissance Town Hall with its animated astronomical clock as well as the Our Lady Before Tyn Church founded in 1385. Dinner and overnight in Prague.

Day 3: Prague & Jan Hus

For God is my witness that I neither preached, affirmed, nor defended them, though they say that I did (Jan Hus).

The history of Prague dates back to the 9th Century with the founding of The Prague Castle around 880 by Prince Borivoj of the Premyslid dynasty. Christianity was brought to the Czech lands by Cyril and Methodius, the "apostles of the Slavs", and was quickly embraced by some members of the dynasty that ruled Bohemia. Today, after breakfast, we see the Royal Castle, St. Vitus Cathedral and the Mala Strana (Little Quarter). Nearby is the Church of St. Nicholas, one of the city's finest. In the afternoon we will visit Prague's most important Hussite historical monuments such as the Jan Hus Monument and the Bethlehem Chapel where he preached. We will also visit the stunning exhibition of medieval art in the Convent of St. Agnes of Bohemia. Enjoy another night in Prague.

Day 4: Tabor

O God and Lord, now the council condemns even Your own act and Your own law as heresy, since You Yourself did lay Your cause before Your Father as the just judge, as an example for us, whenever we are sorely oppressed (Jan Hus).

This morning we transfer to Tabor, the medieval town that Hussites founded, hoping to create a new world according to their principles. The town was founded in the spring of 1420 by Petr Hromádka of Jistebnice and Jan Bydlínský of Bydlín from the most radical wing of the Hussites, who soon became known as the Taborites. The town is iconic for the years in which it flourished as an egalitarian peasant commune. This spirit is celebrated in Smetana's "Song of Freedom", made famous in the English-speaking world by Paul Robeson's recording in Czech and English. The Hussite movement eventually assumed a revolutionary character as soon as the news of the execution of Jan Hus by order of the Council of Constance (July 6, 1415) reached Prague. The knights and nobles of Bohemia and Moravia, who were in favor of church reform, sent a protest to the Council of Constance, known as the protestatio Bohemorum, which condemned the execution of Hus in the strongest language. The attitude of Sigismund, Holy Roman Emperor, who sent threatening letters to Bohemia declaring that he would shortly drown all Wycliffites and Hussites, greatly incensed

the people. In 1419 the Hussite War broke out which lasted almost fifteen years. Upon arrival in Tabor we will visit the Tabor Museum and enjoy a lecture about the military history of the Hussites. In the afternoon we travel further west into Germany. We arrive in Coburg in evening for dinner and overnight.

Day 5: Coburg

A theologian is born by living, nay dying and being damned, not by thinking, reading, or speculating (Martin Luther, Table Talk, 352).

This morning we visit one of Germany's largest castles, the mighty Veste Coburg citadel. In 1530, Martin Luther lived in the castle for about six months under the protection of Elector John the Steadfast. Luther intended to attend the Diet of Augsburg (a representative assembly) but ended up working on his German translation of the Bible, because of his status as an outlaw of the Holy Roman Empire. Philip Melanchthon attended in Luther's place, and participated in the drawing up of the Augsburg Confession. Today the Veste Coburg is home to three museums: the Ducal Palace --Fürstenbau—(with many furnished rooms of the Dukes of Coburg, including the apartment where Martin Luther lived); the Armory –Rüstkammer—(containing the largest collection of medieval armor and weaponry in Germany, with over 10,500 items) and the Art Collections --Kunstsammlungen—(which contains a world class collection of engravings, coins, documents, and glassware). Our travels continue in the afternoon to Wittenberg for a three night stay.

Day 6: Wittenberg

Justice is a temporary thing that must at last come to an end; but the conscience is eternal and will never die (Martin Luther).

Wittenberg is of such importance in Luther's life that its official name is Lutherstadt-Wittenberg (Luther City Wittenberg). In 1517, on the doors of All Saints' Church in Wittenburg (also known as the Schlosskirche or "Castle Church" and built 1496–1506), Luther nailed his 95 Theses that sparked the Reformation. The church and doors were seriously damaged by fire in 1760. Still, we'll see the famous doors (now bronze replacements) which bear the Latin text of the 95 Theses, and the restored burial church of the Reformers. We will also visit City Church (a twin-towered Gothic church in which Luther preached during the Reformation, was married (1525) and baptized his six children), Luther's well-preserved house where he and his family lived (it contains many Reformation relics, including Luther's desk, his pulpit, and first editions of his books) and the Renaissance mansion of Philip Melanchton, Luther's right-hand man. Now the mansion is a museum commemorating his life and contains statues of Luther and Melanchton. We will have much to think about as we gather for dinner and enjoy an overnight stay in Wittenberg.

Day 7: Berlin

To know of someone here and there whom we accord with, who is living on with us, even in silence—this makes our earthly ball a peopled garden (Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship).

Today's excursion to Germany's largest city, Berlin, will do much to help us understand the notion of Zeitgeist (a wonderful German term referring to the general cultural, intellectual, spiritual, political climate or mood of a city). We will visit the recently-reunited city (after WWII, the victorious powers divided the city into sectors analogous to the occupation zones into which Germany was divided; the sectors of the Western Allies formed West Berlin, while the Soviet sector formed East Berlin). We will see the eastern sector with its famous Unter den Linden Strasse, (an iconic

boulevard of linden trees which formerly led directly to the city palace of the Prussian monarchs), the Russian War Memorial, the Brandenburg Gate (a former monumental entry to Unter den Linden and the only remaining gate of a series through which Berlin was once accessed) and the world-famous Pergamon Altar (an incredible construction built during the first half of the second century B.C. and decorated with a series of friezes showing battles and scenes from the lives of legendary historical figures). We will also see what remains of "the Wall," and "Checkpoint Charley" as we pass into the western sector to experience Kurfurstendamm Strasse (home to some of Berlin's most luxurious stores). At its eastern end, we will see Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church, and we will visit the Olympic Stadium built for the 1916 Olympic Games. Although it was originally intended for the 1916 Summer Olympics, it was finally finished for the 1936 Summer Olympics. The afternoon will provide ample opportunity to walk, shop and further explore the distinctive character of this unforgettable city, before returning to Wittenberg for another overnight stay.

Day 8: Eisleben

Come to me, all of you who weary, and I will give you rest (Luther's last sermon in St. Andrew's Church. He finished with the words: "I am able to say many more things about this text, but I feel very weak and sick today. I hope I can do it later." The following Thursday he died.).

Martin Luther was born and died in the small city of Eisleben (Luther had a special affection for this city, now officially known as "Luther-City Eisleben" Lutherstadt Eisleben). We'll enjoy a guided tour of all the Luther sites in Eisleben, including his birth house and death house -- which are both now well-preserved museums. We'll also visit the Church of St. Peter and Paul (also known as the Taufkirche or "baptism church"), where Martin Luther was baptized on November 11, 1483. The remains of the original baptismal font whose Latin inscription reads, "Rudera baptistierii, quo tinctus est b. Martinus Lutherus 1483," can still be seen inside the church. We'll also see the very pulpit from which Luther preached his last sermon in St. Andrew's Church. In the late afternoon we drive to Eisenach for dinner and overnight.

Day 9: Eisenach & Wartburg Castle

The Germans weren't a people until Luther (Johann Wolfgang von Goethe who in 1777 spent five weeks in the Wartburg Castle).

This morning we drive up a steep forested slope to one of the best-preserved medieval castles in Germany, Wartburg Castle, which was founded in 1067 and which looms over the city of Eisenach. It was at Wartburg Castle that Martin Luther, disguised as "Knight George," translated the New Testament into German. At the castle there is a museum containing mainly Reformation artifacts (paintings, sculptures, weapons, furniture and tapestries, and the Lutherstube, the room where Luther did the translating and upon whose wall hangs a portrait of him disguised as Knight George). While none of the furnishings are original to Luther's time, the stove and desk approximate what Luther's room would have looked like during his 10-month stay, and behind the stove is a hole going through to the bare masonry which is associated with the legend that Luther threw his inkpot at the devil. Eisenach was home to Martin Luther as a child, and it was also the birthplace of Johann Sebastian Bach. We will visit the Bachhaus, the first worldwide museum to be dedicated to the life and work of Johann Sebastian Bach, and also visit the Lutherhaus, one of the oldest and most picturesque half-timbered buildings remaining in Eisenach. Now, the Lutherhaus is a museum featuring multimedia exhibits relating Luther's teachings. We will also

explore the Marktplatz with the Georgenkirche (the Church of St. George) where Bach was baptized and where the Gothic baptismal stone still stands.

Day 10: Erfurt

Superstition, idolatry, and hypocrisy have ample wages, but truth goes a-begging (Martin Luther, Table Talk, 67).

Today we travel to Erfurt, nicknamed "Thuringian Rome" because of its many churches, chapels and monasteries. Erfurt flourished in the Middle Ages thanks to the woad plant (a source of valuable blue dye), but perhaps more importantly to us, the city played a significant role in the life of Martin Luther—for it is here he spent six years studying at the University then living as a monk in the Augustinian Monastery. We will enjoy a walking tour through this richly beautiful, medieval city, to explore some unforgettable sites including the Augustinian Monastery wherein is housed a Luther Exhibition showing restored monastic cells as they might have looked in Luther's time. We will also see where Luther was ordained at St. Mary's Cathedral (Dom, Mariensdom, or Domberg St Marien), an impressive Gothic cathedral perched on a hillside and containing some art masterpieces including the world's largest medieval free-swinging bell and a small altar of The Madonna and Child with Saints Catherine and Barbara by Lucas Cranach. As the day draws to a close, we return to Eisenach for dinner and another overnight stay.

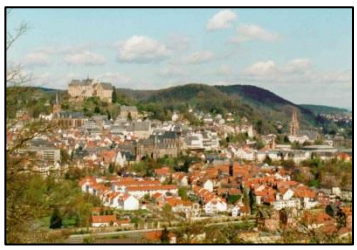
Day 11: Marburg

"Hoc est corpus meum" ("This is my body") (Words Luther wrote in chalk on his table at the Colloquy of Marburg, to indicate his firm stance regarding the Eucharist or sacrament of the Lord's Supper).

It was in Marburg (which is still an unspoilt, spire-dominated Gothic/Renaissance city on a hill) that the Colloquy of Marburg met in 1529, in which Luther, Oecolampadius, Melanchthon and Zwingli all participated in an assembly of German and Swiss theologians to establish doctrinal unity in the emerging Protestant states. Martin Luther drew up the "Articles of Marburg", which embodied the most important points of doctrine so that the colloquy could arrive at a degree of unanimity. Agreement was achieved on fourteen of fifteen points, the exception being the nature of the Eucharist— the sacrament of the Lord's Supper—an issue crucial to Luther.

Day 12: Depart for Home

We will let the power of the holy places and priceless experiences settle over us, then like other pilgrims of other times, go back to our lives with renewed faith and readiness.

We leave our hotel and head for the airport to return to the US.

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